

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 2784

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TAGS: OVIP PINR SHUM CU
SUBJ: CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ MEETS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER

1. DURING AIRPORT STAY IN HAVANA SEP 14, IN CONNECTION WITH SPECIAL CHARTER FLIGHT FOR DUAL NATIONALS, CONGRESSMAN STEPHEN J. SOLARZ (D-BROOKLYN) MET BRIEFLY WITH CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER MALMIERCA. LATTER EXPLAINED THAT PRESIDENT CASTRO IS OUT OF THE COUNTRY AND FIRST VICE PRESIDENT RAUL CASTRO COULD NOT BE PRESENT SO HE WAS DELEGATED. DURING EXCHANGE OF PLEASANTRIES SOLARZ MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) CUBAN ACTION IN ALLOWING DUAL NATIONALS TO DEPART WAS GREATLY APPRECIATED IN US AS A HUMANITARIAN GESTURE.

B) IN ADDITION, THIS GESTURE STRENGTHENED THE HANDS OF CONGRESSMEN LIKE SOLARZ WHO SUPPORT THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS.

C) SOLARZ HAS RECOMMENDED TO PRESIDENT CARTER THAT THE US MAKE AN APPROPRIATE UNILATERAL GESTURE TO CUBA IN RETURN. WHILE EMPHASIZING THAT HE DOES NOT SPEAK FOR THE ADMINISTRATION, AND THAT THERE WAS OBVIOUSLY NO TIME TO DISCUSS THE MAJOR PROBLEMS IN US-CUBAN RELATIONS, SOLARZ ASKED WHETHER MALMIERCA HAD ANY THOUGHTS ON WHAT US GESTURE MIGHT BE MADE.

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2. FONMIN MALMIERCA MADE FOLLOWING POINTS IN RETURN.

A) CUBAN GOVERNMENT ALSO REGARDS DEPARTURE OF DUAL NATIONALS PRIMARILY AS UNILATERAL HUMANITARIAN ACT, AND NO RECIPROCAL GESTURE FROM THE USG IS EXPECTED.

B) CUBA BELIEVES THAT NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS

BETWEEN CUBA AND US IS IN THE INTERESTS OF BOTH PARTIES, AND WOULD ALSO BE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS GENERALLY. (HE DID NOT THIS TIME USE THE WORD "DETENTE" AS IS USUAL HERE.)

C) CRITICAL PROBLEM IN US-CUBAN RELATIONS IS CLEARLY THE TOTAL LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO, WITHOUT WHICH "NEGOTIATIONS" ON OTHER BILATERAL PROBLEMS WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. (MALMIERCA DID NOT SAY "IMPOSSIBLE" BUT THAT WAS THE IMPORT OF HIS COMMENT.) MALMIERCA CITED GUANTANAMO AS THE SECOND MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM FROM THE CUBAN STANDPOINT.

3. SOLARZ ALLUDED TO AFRICA AND THE COMPENSATION PROBLEM AS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FROM THE US STANDPOINT. UNFORTUNATELY, HE DID NOT MENTION THE US POLITICAL PRISONERS, ALTHOUGH HE WAS PREVIOUSLY REMINDED OF THIS PROBLEM BY USINT CHIEF.

4. IN CONVERSATION INVOLVING SUBORDINATE MINREX OFFICIALS PRIOR TO MALMIERCA'S ARRIVAL, SOLARZ EXPRESSED HIS SUPPORT FOR LIBERALIZED FAMILY VISITS BETWEEN US AND CUBA, RESUMPTION OF REGULARLY SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS, AND INCREASED CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES. (IN A PRESS RELEASE BEING PUT OUT BY HIS OFFICE TODAY, SOLARZ ALSO CALLS FOR LIFTING THE EMBARGO INsofar AS IT PROHIBITS THE SHIPMENT

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OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES TO CUBA.)

5. IN CLOSING, CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ TOLD MALMIERCA THAT WHILE THEY DO NOT AGREE ON ALL MATTERS, HE CONSIDERED PRESIDENT CASTRO THE MOST IMPRESSIVE WORLD STATESMAN HE HAS MET, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO HIS WARMTH AND THE DEPTH OF HIS KNOWLEDGE OF INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS. HE AND MALMIERCA AGREED THAT THEY WOULD TRY TO GET TOGETHER IN NEW YORK DURING THE LATTER'S ATTENDANCE AT THE UNGA.

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